

Senior Citizens Advisory Committee
Wednesday, January 19, 2011
Town Hall, Old Town Road
11:15 a.m.

Present: Chair Gail Pierce, Marguerite Donnelly, Janet Merritt, Linda Spak, Sandra Kelly and Dorothy Graham. Betsy Theve and Mimi Leveille were absent. Deputy Town Clerk Millie McGinnes was present for the recording of minutes.

Gail Pierce called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

Approve Minutes of December 15, 2010 Meeting

Ms. Graham moved to approve the minutes of December 15, 2010 as amended. Ms. Donnelly seconded the motion and it carried.

5 Ayes (Kelly, Pierce, Spak, Donnelly, Graham) 0 Nays
3 Absent (Theve, Leveille, Merritt)

Ms. Merritt was not present for the vote. She joined the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

Conversation with Recreation Director Rob Closter

It was noted that Recreation Director Rob Closter could not make the meeting today. He will be invited to the next meeting.

Ms. Donnelly reported that she had met with Rob Closter and discussed incorporating programs for seniors such as senior aerobics or Thai Chi within the Recreation activities. She stated that he was agreeable and would call South County and research a potential Thai Chi instructor. It was noted that the Recreation budget was mostly allocated to children and some should be reallocated to fund adult and senior programs.

Ms. Merritt stated that for the future, there should be an autonomous Senior Department within the Town government addressing senior programs and issues. Ms. Graham concurred.

Update on Activities:

Swimming Pool

Ms. Spak reported that she was waiting to have a meeting with Rob Closter, Meredith McAloon, and the Neptune's maintenance director to further discuss the pool stairs.

FISH

Ms. Pierce reported that Ann Fagan had primarily taken over the FISH coordination with enthusiasm. She noted that there was not a lot of activity, but Ms. Fagan is interested in helping to publicize the program.

Senior Moments

There was no report regarding Senior Moments.

Community Bulletin Board

Ms. Merritt stated that Elizabeth Connor has volunteered to help with the computer logistics regarding the Google Groups. Ms. Merritt and Ms. Kelly will meet with Elizabeth Connor next week and be ready to launch the Community Bulletin Board by the next meeting.

Change the Name of the Committee

At the last meeting the committee voted to request a name change of “Senior Affairs Committee.” This name was revisited and following discussion, Ms. Spak made a motion to modify the name change request to reflect “Senior Advisory Committee” and to send a letter to the Town Council requesting such a change. Ms. Merritt seconded the motion and it carried.

6 Ayes (Kelly, Pierce, Spak, Donnelly, Graham, Merritt) 0 Nays

2 Absent (Theve, Leveille)

Providing Seniors with Safety Flashlights

Ms. Pierce reported she has flashlights available.

Money Disbursement

Discussion ensued regarding the use of the funds in the Committee’s budget. The following items were suggested:

- Advertisements to promote some programs such as the Community Bulletin Board, FISH, etc.
- A donation toward the replacement of the Community Center carpet. Much discussion ensued.

New Business:

Ms. Spak presented the following two articles:

- Wall Street Journal article “Teens take Elders to Tech Boot Camp” about teens hosting tutorials for seniors to teach them e-tech basics. Ms. Spak suggested implementing such a program in concert with the Block Island School, for students to host computer classes, woodworking, etc. Ms. Spak will meet with the School Superintendent to discuss launching such a program.
- AARP Magazine article “Create the Good Community” which offered on-line tool kits to help initiate helpful programs in communities such as walking groups, shredding events and residential energy savings. Ms. Spak will look into the offerings.

Ms. Donnelly stated that she thought a good activity for seniors would be to attend high school sporting events and act as sports boosters.

From the audience, Shirley Kessler reflected upon a past tutorial program between the volunteers in the community and the Block Island school. Discussion ensued.

Public Input

Shirley Kessler questioned if anything further had been done regarding a workshop program for the spring. As the answer was no, Ms. Donnelly stated that she would work with Ms. Kessler on the project.

Next Meeting – February 16, 2011 at 11:15 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2011 at 11:15 a.m.

At 12:17 p.m., Ms. Kelly moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Graham and carried unanimously.

Millie McGinnes
Deputy Town Clerk

Approved: March 23, 2011